

To Whom It May Concern:

I am requesting that USFWS immediately declare the sea otter translocation to San Nicolas Island a colossal failure, eliminate the designated "no otter zone," and not remove any more sea otters from San Nicolas Island or the zone.

As you well know, the sea otter is a major "keystone" species (see Yvonne Baskin, for SCOPE, the Scientific Committee on Problems of the Environment, *The Work of Nature: How the Diversity of Life Sustains Us,* Washington, DC: Island Press, 1997).

Therefore, it is imperative that we help preserve the numbers of these wondrous little creatures, and find ways to allocate funds for retraining toward other occupations those who fish for seafood in competition with the sea otter.

Thank you for considering these views.

--Timothy Conway, Ph.D.

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